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PART 1 OF 4
ISSUE 41
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PREVIOUSLY...

The city of New Mobotropolis is under SIEGE!

Sonic the Hedgehog's home city continues to reel following the devastating attacks of Dr. Eggman. These attacks have lead to the destruction of the city's heroes, the Freedom Fighters.

To make matters worse, the city has also been attacked from within! The evil wizard Ixis Naugus, and his apprentice Geoffrey St. John, have usurped the crown of Acorn, and driven the former King Elias Acorn and his family into exile! King Naugus has used his dark magic to turn the tide of public opinion in his favor, but such an unstable and evil ruler has put the entire kingdom and its people in jeopardy.

But little does Naugus know, that in the shadows of the city in which he rules, there is a movement rising up. Elias and retired Secret Intelligence Director Harvey Who have been recruiting teammates for a new initiative. A SECRET initiative.

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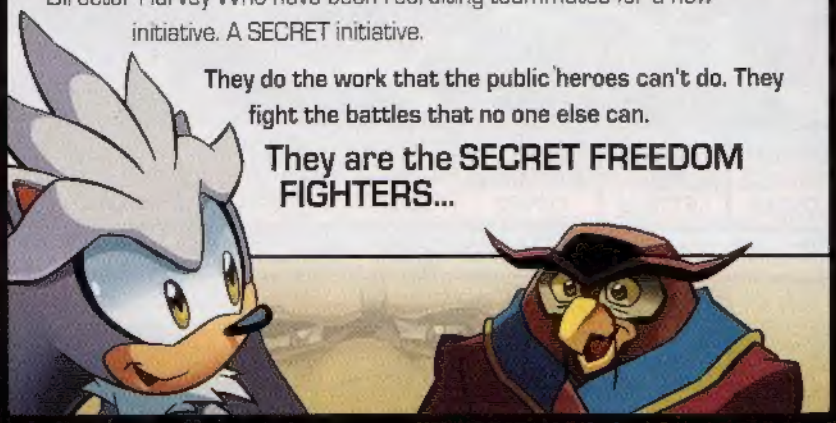

WHO'S WHO

SILVER THE HEDGEHOG
TIME TRAVELER
--CALL SIGN "ACE"

SHARD
REFORMED METAL SONIC
--CALL SIGN "JACK"

LARRY LYNX
SUPER-JINX
--CALL SIGN "JOKER"

GEOFFREY ST. JOHN
TRAITOR AND IXIS APPRENTICE

SONIC UNIVERSE (ISSN: 2157-3050), No. 41, August, 2012. Published monthly by Archie Comic Publications, Inc., 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543-2318. Jonathan Goldwater, Publisher/Co-CEO, Nancy Silberkleit, Co-CEO, Mike Pellerito, President, Victor Gorelick, Co-President. Single copies $2.99; Subscription rate: $35.88 for 12 issues. All Canadian orders payable in U.S. funds.
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UNSUNG HEROES PART ONE

The BIG GUNS!

SOUMERCA

HOW'S IT HANGING, BUDDY?

F-F-FINE! ARE W-W-WE THERE Y-Y-YET?

IT'S BEGINNING TO FEEL LIKE I SPEND MORE TIME *HERE* THAN IN MY OWN TIME-LINE...

IAN FLYNN WRITER	TRACY YARDLEY/ PENCILS	JIM AMASH INKS	STEVE DOWNER COLORS	JACK MORELLI LETTERS	YARDLEY/ & DOWNER COVER	VINCENT LOVALLO ASSISTANT EDITOR	PAUL KAMINSKI EDITOR/ EXEC. EDITOR	VICTOR GORELICK ED-IN-CHIEF

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BEN BATES - SKETCH VARIANT COVER

"EVEN JOIN THESE "SECRET FREEDOM FIGHTERS"!
HOURS EARLIER, AT SECRET H.Q...
...AND OUR INFORMANT ON THE COUNCIL SAYS ST. JOHN IS BOUND FOR SOUMERCA. WE MUST KNOW WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT THAT NAUGUS WOULD SEND HIS ERRAND BOY SO FAR FROM HIS SIDE.
HARVEY WHO DIRECTOR OF THE S.F.F.
AGENT ACE WILL LEAD THE TEAM TRACKING ST. JOHN AND SECURE A TRACKING DEVICE SO WE KNOW HIS MOVEMENTS IN THE FUTURE. AGENT KING WILL LEAD THE TEAM TO INVESTIGATE NAUGUS.
REMEMBER: ANONYMITY IS YOUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE, SO USE YOUR CALL SIGNS AT ALL TIMES.
ANY QUESTIONS?
ER... MORE LIKE A REMINDER...
I REMEMBER OUR DEAL. WHILE YOU'RE AWAY, I WILL BE GOING OVER YOUR NOTES AND WILL IDENTIFY THE "TRAITOR" YOU'RE HUNTING FOR. YOU SCRATCH MY BACK, I SCRATCH YOURS.
R-RIGHT.
JUST MAKING SURE.

WINDY VALLEY--SOUMERCA
THAT'S OUR TARGET'S AIRBOARD.
I GUESS HE'S BELOW.
OKAY! THIS IS GOING TO BE RISKY.
STAND BACK!
KLIK
Whew!
THERE! TRACKER ATTACHED! OH, MAN, THAT WAS SO DANGEROUS AND HARD!

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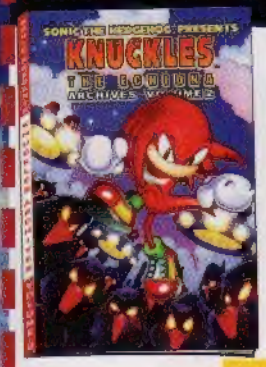

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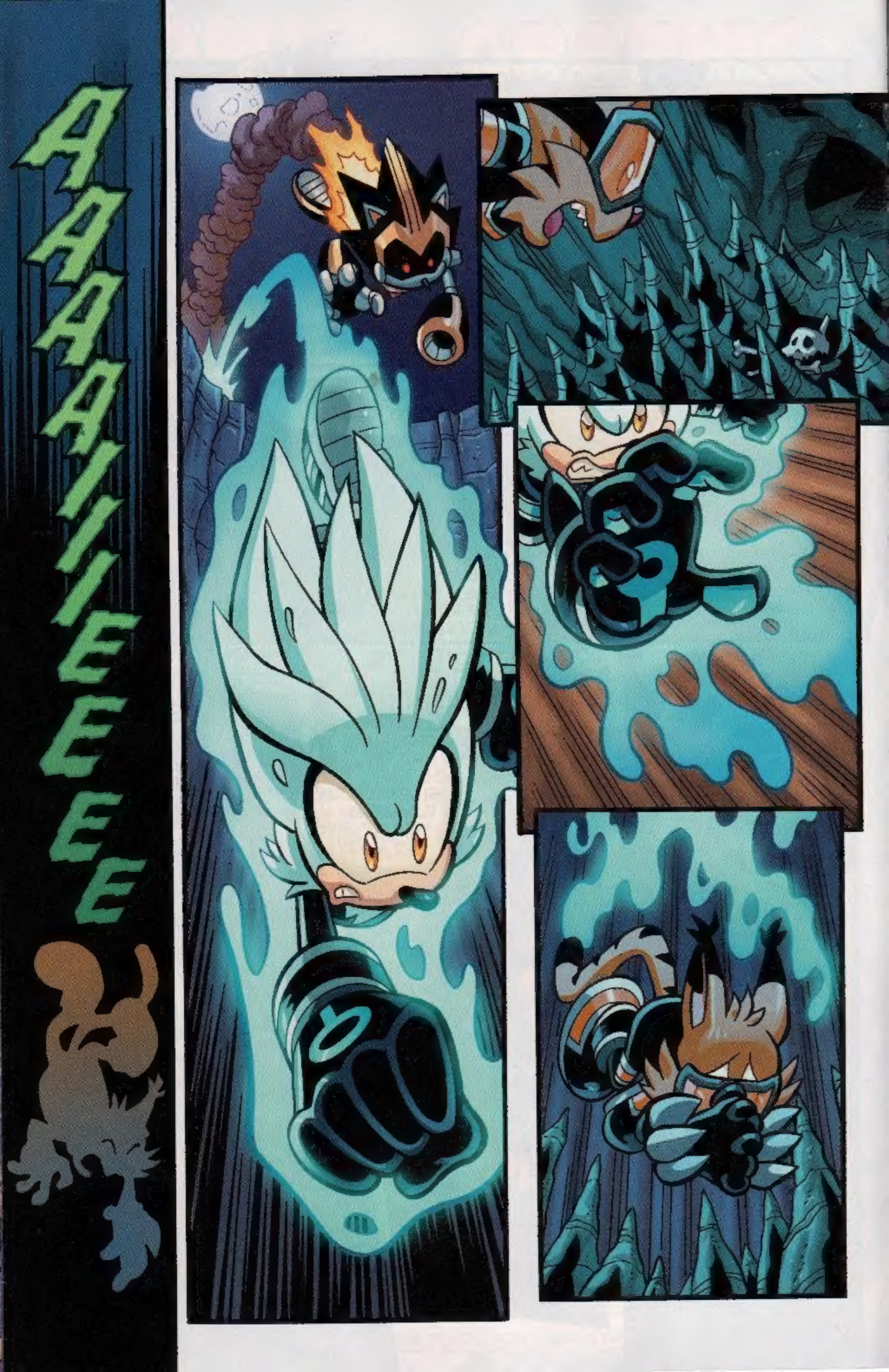
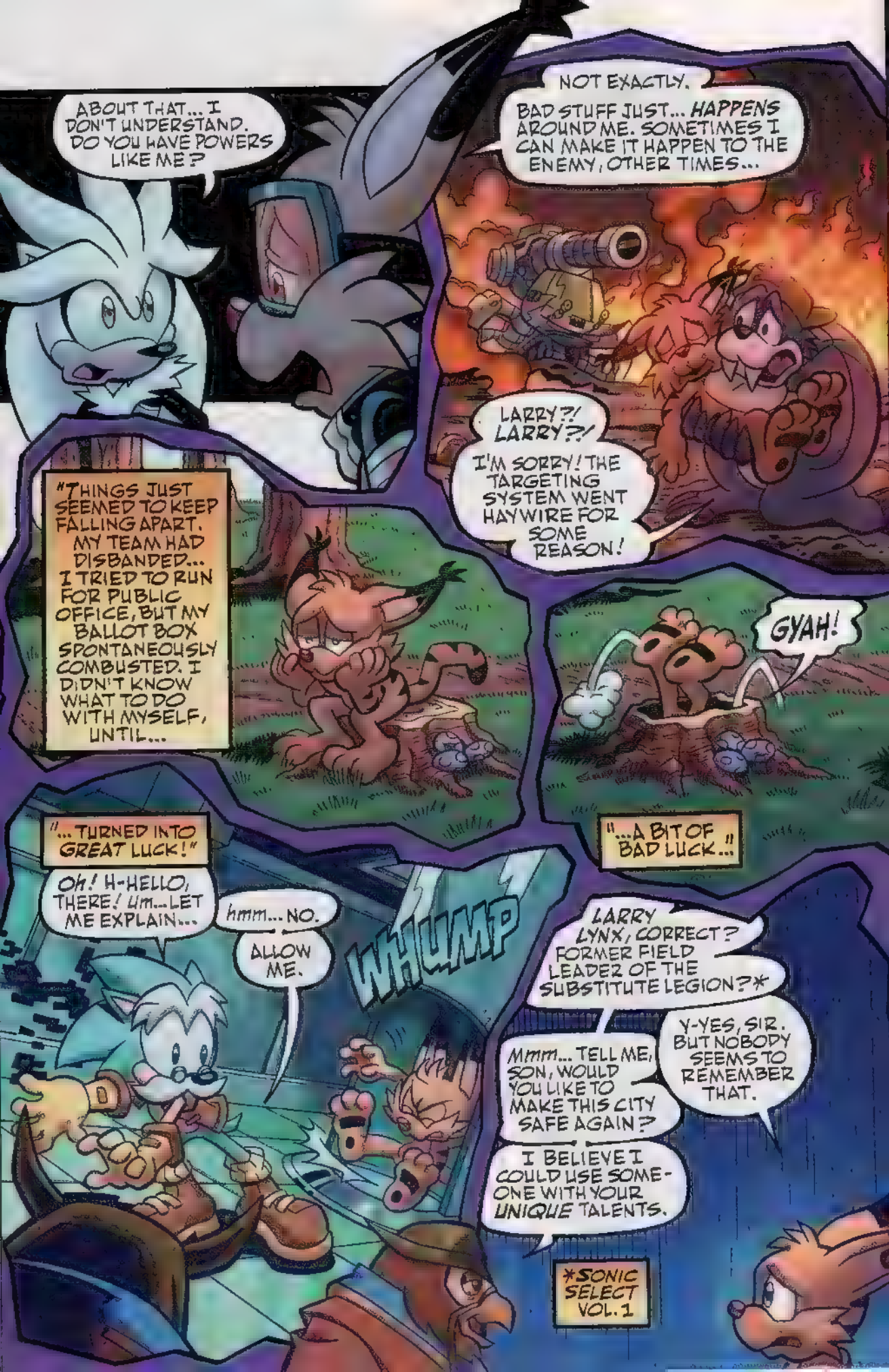
WOULD YOU KNOCK IT OFF? WE'RE ON A SERIOUS MISSION HERE! AT LEAST IF WE HAVE TO TRACK HIM AGAIN, IT'LL BE EASIER!
DON'T GET YOUR SPINES IN A KNOT. WE'RE HERE TO TAKE ON ONE GUY.
I THINK WE CAN HANDLE IT.
I'M NOT PICKING UP ANY TRAPS...
SHARD-- CALL SIGN "JACK" REFORMED METAL SONIC
...BUT THAT'S A LONG WAY DOWN!
I'LL LOWER US TO THE BOTTOM, THEN.
HOW ABOUT "NO"? YOUR POWERS SHORT-OUT ELECTRONICS, AND IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, I'M A ROBOT.
IT'S HOW I USE THEM. AND MY POWERS ARE SILENT. YOUR ROCKETS WOULD GIVE US AWAY.
KRUMBLE
AND WE'RE TRYING TO BE SUBTLE!
!
AUGH!
LARRY LINX-- CALL SIGN "JOKER" SUPER-JINX


AAAAAIIIEEEEE

AND-- WHOOSH--! I MOVE EVEN FASTER THAN YOU CAN THINK!
CONGRATULATIONS. AND NOW, BETWEEN HIS SCREAMING AND YOUR ENGINE, ST. JOHN WILL KNOW WE'RE HERE!
YOU'RE A "GLASS HALF-EMPTY" TYPE OF GUY, AREN'T YOU?
WHY WOULD YOU BUILD A DEATH TRAP THAT LEADS INTO A DEATH TRAP?
TO KEEP THIS PLACE A SECRET FROM EVERY-ONE...
STEP BACK, BUD. YOU'VE TRIPPED ENOUGH TODAY.
I'M SORRY! I DON'T REALLY HAVE FULL CONTROL OVER MY JINXES.


ABOUT THAT... I DON'T UNDERSTAND. DO YOU HAVE POWERS LIKE ME?
NOT EXACTLY.
BAD STUFF JUST... HAPPENS AROUND ME. SOMETIMES I CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN TO THE ENEMY, OTHER TIMES...
LARRY?! LARRY?!
I'M SORRY! THE TARGETING SYSTEM WENT HAYWIRE FOR SOME REASON!
"THINGS JUST SEEMED TO KEEP FALLING APART. MY TEAM HAD DISBANDED... I TRIED TO RUN FOR PUBLIC OFFICE, BUT MY BALLOT BOX SPONTANEOUSLY COMBUSTED. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF, UNTIL...
GYAH!
"...A BIT OF BAD LUCK..."
"...TURNED INTO GREAT LUCK!"
Oh! H-HELLO, THERE! Um... LET ME EXPLAIN...
hmm... NO.
ALLOW ME.
WHUMP
LARRY LYNX, CORRECT? FORMER FIELD LEADER OF THE SUBSTITUTE LEGION?*
Y-YES, SIR. BUT NOBODY SEEMS TO REMEMBER THAT.
Mmm... TELL ME, SON, WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE THIS CITY SAFE AGAIN?
I BELIEVE I COULD USE SOMEONE WITH YOUR UNIQUE TALENTS.
*SONIC SELECT VOL. 1

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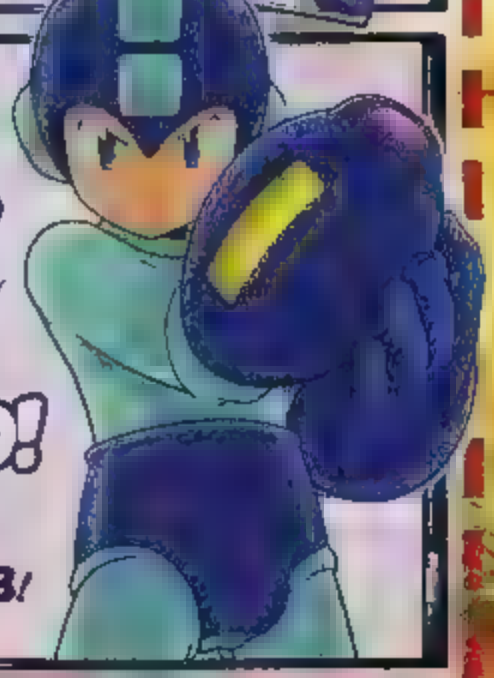

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SO THE DIRECTOR DECIDED TO SEND YOU-- SOMEONE WHO CAUSES RANDOM THINGS TO GO WRONG-- ON SENSITIVE SPY MISSIONS?
:COUGH: I KNOW WHO THE TRAITOR IS! :COUGH: 'SCUSE ME WHILE I LEAP TO CONCLUSIONS IN A SINGLE BOUND! :COUGH:
:HACK: :COUGH: :Ahem!:
THE DIRECTOR IS HELPING ME WITH THAT.
I KNOW HE IS, HOT-SHOT.
HE'S ALSO GIVING ME AND LARRY A SECOND SHOT WITH HIS LITTLE SPY TEAM.
MIGHT WANT TO KEEP THAT IN MIND SINCE THIS IS YOUR-- WHAT? --FOURTH?
HEY! I'M TRYING TO SAVE YOUR TIME-PERIOD!
AND LARRY'S BEEN FIGHTING FOR IT SINCE BEFORE YOU WERE BORN!
THAT'S BECAUSE I'M FROM THE FUTURE!
HEY GUYS?
ACE? JACK? WE'VE GOT SOMETHING UP AHEAD.
NOPE. NOT SUSPICIOUS AT ALL.

ANYTHING?
NADA.
BUT IF IT'S OLD OR RUDIMENTARY ENOUGH, MY SCANS MIGHT NOT PICK IT UP.
THEN IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S UP TO ME!
LA--JOKER! WAIT! I CAN JUST--!
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TRAP!!
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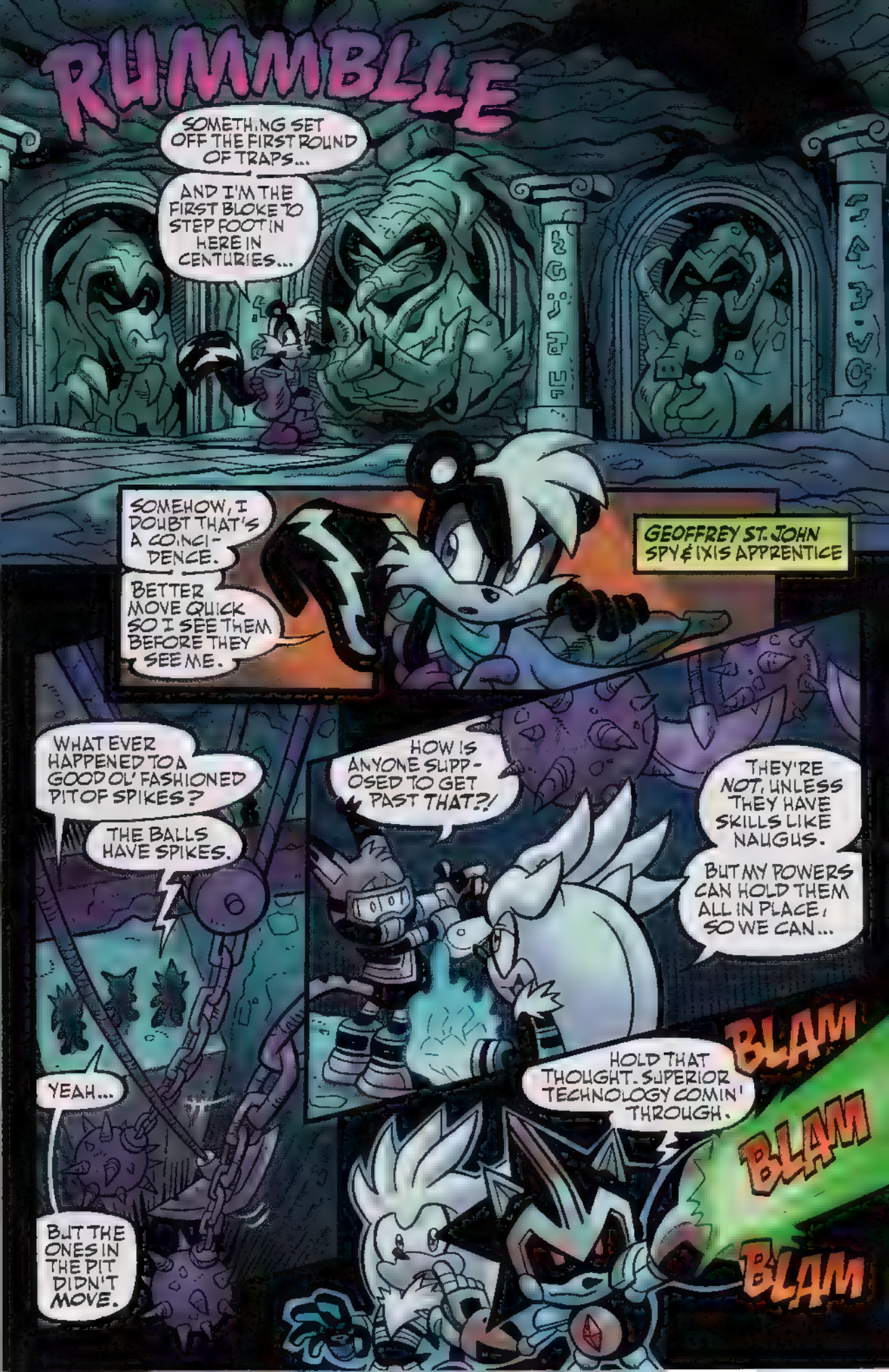
RUMMBLLE
SOMETHING SET OFF THE FIRST ROUND OF TRAPS...
AND I'M THE FIRST BLOKE TO STEP FOOT IN HERE IN CENTURIES...
SOMEHOW, I DOUBT THAT'S A COINCIDENCE.
BETTER MOVE QUICK SO I SEE THEM BEFORE THEY SEE ME.
GEOFFREY ST. JOHN
SPY & IXIS APPRENTICE
WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO A GOOD OL' FASHIONED PIT OF SPIKES?
THE BALLS HAVE SPIKES.
YEAH...
BUT THE ONES IN THE PIT DIDN'T MOVE.
HOW IS ANYONE SUPPOSED TO GET PAST THAT?!
THEY'RE NOT, UNLESS THEY HAVE SKILLS LIKE NAUGUS.
BUT MY POWERS CAN HOLD THEM ALL IN PLACE, SO WE CAN...
HOLD THAT THOUGHT. SUPERIOR TECHNOLOGY COMIN' THROUGH.
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

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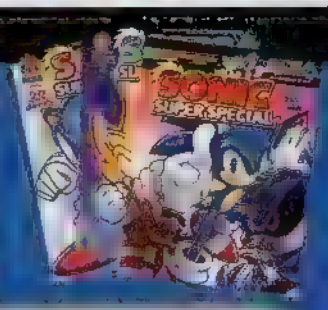

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CHANK
KRASH
JUST MAKING YOUR JOB EASIER, ACE.
BLOWING THINGS UP AND ALERTING OUR TARGET DOESN'T HELP, JACK.
MEH.
WE BLEW THAT ANGLE OF THE MISSION A HALLWAY AGO.
CLEAR ON THE LEFT.
CLEAR RIGHT.

THAT LOOKS LIKE WRITING. CAN YOU MAKE OUT WHAT IT SAYS?
SEEMS LIKE A DEAD LANGUAGE. RUNNING A CROSS-REFERENCE.
OKAY, I THINK IT SAYS: "THIS IS THE CRYPT OF IXIS VALE, ONE OF IXIS MOGUL'S FOUR ELITE."
IXIS... MOGUL?
ARE YOU SURE?
PRETTY SURE, YEAH. WHY?
UH... NO REASON.
SURE. "NO REASON!"
IF THIS IS A CRYPT, WHERE ARE THE REMAINS? THIS IS JUST A ROOM.
IT SAYS VALE'S REMAINS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE RIGHT HERE.

WHICH MEANS ST. JOHN'S ALREADY BEEN HERE. HE MUST BE HIDING! I KNEW HE'D HEAR US COMING!
HE'S NOT HIDING...
...HE'S ALREADY GONE! I GOT FRESH TRACKS!
I'VE GOT HIM!
JACK! WAIT!
HE'S FAST, BUT NOT THAT FAST!
THEN WE NEED A SHORT CUT. HE MUST'VE SLIPPED RIGHT PAST US, SO IF WE CAME IN HERE, AND THEN THE PASSAGE LEADS LIKE SO...
...THAT PUTS HIM ABOUT THERE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

AUGH!
SHOW-OFF.
YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS. CAN YOU SEE IF HE'S CAUGHT IN THAT MESS?
NOT IMMEDIATELY, BUT I SAW HIM FALL.
HE SHOULD BE IMMOBILE, RIGHT?
MAYBE NOT.
UNLESS I'M CONCENTRATING ON HIM, HE MAY BE JUST FLOATING IN THERE. IT'S HARD TO...

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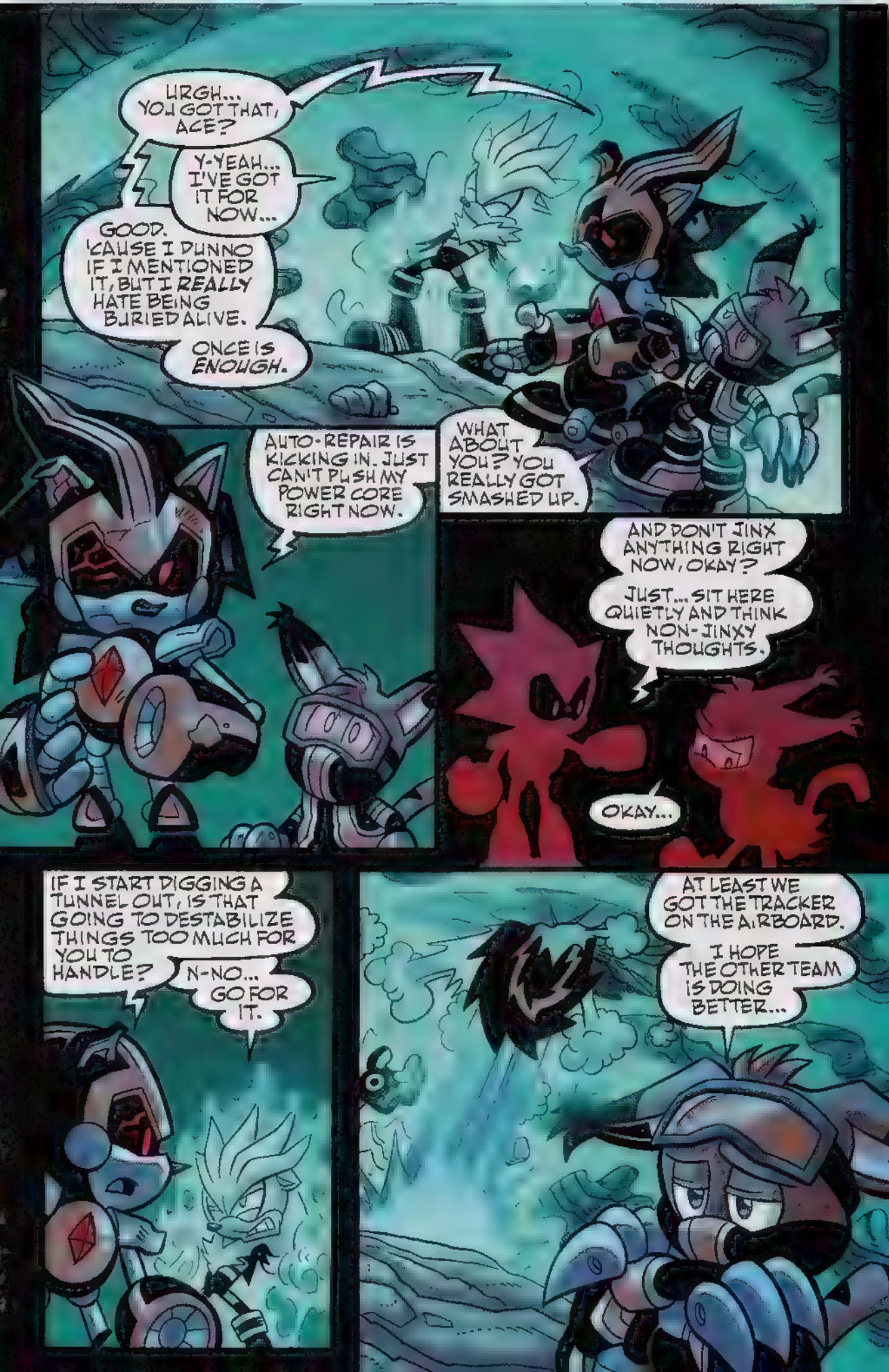
3505

I SEE HIM!
FREEZE!!
!
SSSSSS
BOOM
BOOM
THWIP

ARE YOU OKAY?!
HAVE I EVER MENTIONED HOW MUCH I HATE BEING BURIED ALIVE?
BOOM
RUMMBLE
I WON'T LET YOU GET AW-- AHH!!
:GASP!: OVERDID IT A TAD :GASP!: WITH THE MAGIC :GASP!:
:PANT!: THAT WAS TOO CLOSE! :PANT!:
I DON'T KNOW WHO THOSE BLOKES WERE... BUT I'M GLAD I WON'T HAVE TO FACE THEM AGAIN...


URGH... YOU GOT THAT, ACE?
Y-YEAH... I'VE GOT IT FOR NOW...
GOOD. 'CAUSE I DUNNO IF I MENTIONED IT, BUT I REALLY HATE BEING BURIED ALIVE.
ONCE IS ENOUGH.
AUTO-REPAIR IS KICKING IN. JUST CAN'T PUSH MY POWER CORE RIGHT NOW.
WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU REALLY GOT SMASHED UP.
AND DON'T JINX ANYTHING RIGHT NOW, OKAY?
JUST... SIT HERE QUIETLY AND THINK NON-JINXY THOUGHTS.
OKAY...
IF I START DIGGING A TUNNEL OUT, IS THAT GOING TO DESTABILIZE THINGS TOO MUCH FOR YOU TO HANDLE?
N-NO... GO FOR IT.
AT LEAST WE GOT THE TRACKER ON THE AIRBOARD.
I HOPE THE OTHER TEAM IS DOING BETTER...

MEANWHILE, FAR AWAY FROM SILVER AND HIS TEAM...
WHAT THE--? THERE WASN'T A BRANCHING PATH HERE BEFORE!
HE'S RESHAPING THE CAVE TO TRAP US!
SPLIT UP! STICK TO ONE WALL, AND DOUBLE-BACK IF YOU HIT A DEAD END!
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO SAY "DEAD END"...?

PANT/
PANT/
PANT/
YOU CANNOT HIDE, INTRUDERS! THERE IS NO ESCAPE!
THINGS SEEM TO BE GOING FROM BAD TO WORSE. CHECK BACK NEXT TIME FOR ELIAS' TEAM'S MISSION--WHICH MAY BE THEIR LAST. FOR MORE GREAT SECRET FF ACTION, CHECK OUT CURRENT ISSUES OF SONIC THE HEDGEHOG.

the SONIC SPIN

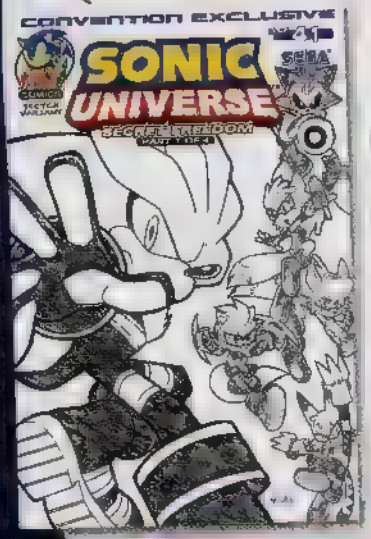
it's editorial commentary, should you choose to accept it!

SECRET AAAAGENT TEAM!

Welcome back, Sonic-fans! This issue is chock-full of specialness! Not only is it the beginning of the brand-new arc, SECRET FREEDOM, and not only does it mark the return of SU artist Tracy Yardley!, but this issue makes Sonic Universe the longest running Sonic comics spin-off title ever!

It was a labor of love, and hats off to then-editor (now-President) Mike Pellerito for launching this series to such heights! Most importantly, thanks to all of you fans who made this series a success, and we look forward to bringing you all more great stories AND setting all kinds of other records with SU in the future!

And speaking of specialty items, make sure y'all head on down to San Diego Comic Con on the weekend of July 13th, 2012 to pick up your copy of the convention-exclusive Sonic Universe #41 variant cover! Celebrate our record-busting issue in style with a sketch cover by Sonic super-star Ben Bates! Only at SDCC!



ORIGINAL CONCEPT COVER FOR SU #41 (ABOVE). THIS ISSUE'S COVER IS INSPIRED BY THE BOX ART FROM THE SEGA VIDEO GAME "SONIC RIVALS" FOR THE PSP. (BELOW)

SAN DIEGO COMIC CON INTERNATIONAL

PICK UP THE SDCC EXCLUSIVE SKETCH VARIANT COVER BY BEN BATES. (TOP) SECRET FREEDOM FIGHTER COSTUME CONCEPT ARTWORK BY TRACY YARDLEY BASED ON CONCEPT ART BY IAN FLYNN AND ALEAH BAKER! (RIGHT)

SEE YA NEXT MONTH!
- Paul

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MY SONIC UNIVERSE™ FAN ART

Reggie G.
from Canada

FAN FUNNIES!

Mitchell M. from Canada

Jaelen M.
from Georgia

Shandarrah M.
sent to sonic@archiecomics.com

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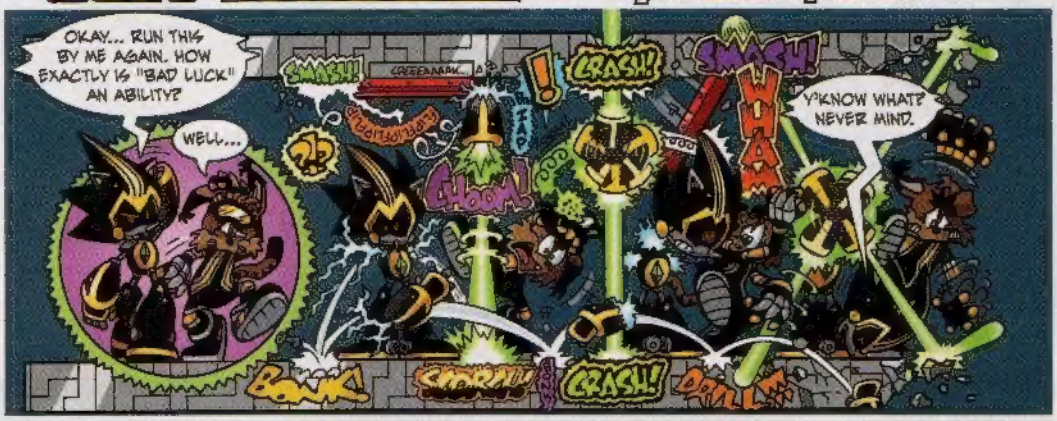
OFF PANEL

THE SECRET FREEDOM FIGHTERS!



SCRIPT: IAN FLYNN PENCILS: JONATHAN GRAY INKS: GARY MARTIN COLORS: ALEAH BAKER

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COMING SOON!

NEXT ISSUE: 42

UNSUNG HEROES PART II

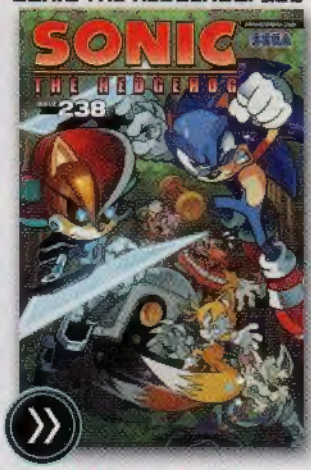
THE UNDER COVER CHAOS CONTINUES IN...

SECRET FREEDOM

PART 2 (of 4)

ON SALE THE WEEK OF 07/24/12!

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG: 238



THE FIGHT RAGES ON!

SONIC BETTER STEP ON IT, OR ELSE LUPE IS LIKELY TO GET LEGIONIZED IN...

"LOYALTY PART 2"

ON SALE THE WEEK OF 07/10/12

Dear 'My Sonic Universe,'
Hello I'm Jada and I love Sonic Universe. I've been reading ever since the Silver Saga started and I'm the biggest Tracy Yardley fan! So can you give him a big hug from me?

Jada T.
sent to sonic@archiecomics.com

How about a well-deserved high five? NOW THAT--that I can do!

Dear 'My Sonic Universe,'
Given the current look of ads for this series, am I to understand that, as I write this, at the end of Scrambled, Sonic Universe is now halfway through its life cycle and we can all look forward to 3 & 1/2 more years of it?

John S.
sent to sonic@archiecomics.com

Hiya, John! I do believe you're referring to the designated "blank" spots on the SU arcs ad! Well, you'll be happy to know that Sonic Universe only has a life-cycle as long as you fans keep reading! So hopefully 3 1/2 years from now, we'll need to re-evaluate the look of that ad!

Dear 'My Sonic Universe,'
Just recently started collecting and reading the Sonic Comics.

Welcome welcome!

I was not aware of their existence in their original run in the 90s, and I must say I like them a lot. I've started collecting and reading the Archives from the very beginning, but I've run into a bit of a snag.

Uh-oh...

I'm sure you've heard this question a million times before, but it's new to me. Why aren't the Sally and Tails Mini Series in any of the Archives or Collections? I'm not buying these comics as collector's items, but as reading material. I'm missing out on huge chunks of the story, and the editors notes in the main comic series reference the miniseries quite frequently, frequently enough that I've stopped reading the main storyline entirely until I can get my hands on at least Princess Sally's and Tails' miniseries stories.

Ah yes, I too faced this problem when trying to read-through the entire Sonic series! Fear not, the Sally and Tails mini-series will BOTH be collected in upcoming volumes of the Sonic Select Graphic Novel series! So there!

What I really don't want to do is hunt up an expensive original edition and devalue it by removing it from its plastic wrapping and thumbing through it while reading it. That's what the Archives are for, right?

Right!

Anyway, if you have heard this question a million times before, I'm sure you have a stock answer prepared. Or maybe, the million-and-first question will be enough to convince you it might be a good idea. Either way, I await a reply.

Sincerely,
New Comic Fan
sent to sonic@archiecomics.com

And a reply ye shall receive!

And that, faithful Sonic comic fans, concludes the letters column to our RECORD-SETTING 41st issue of Sonic Universe!

SEE Y'ALL NEXT MONTH!

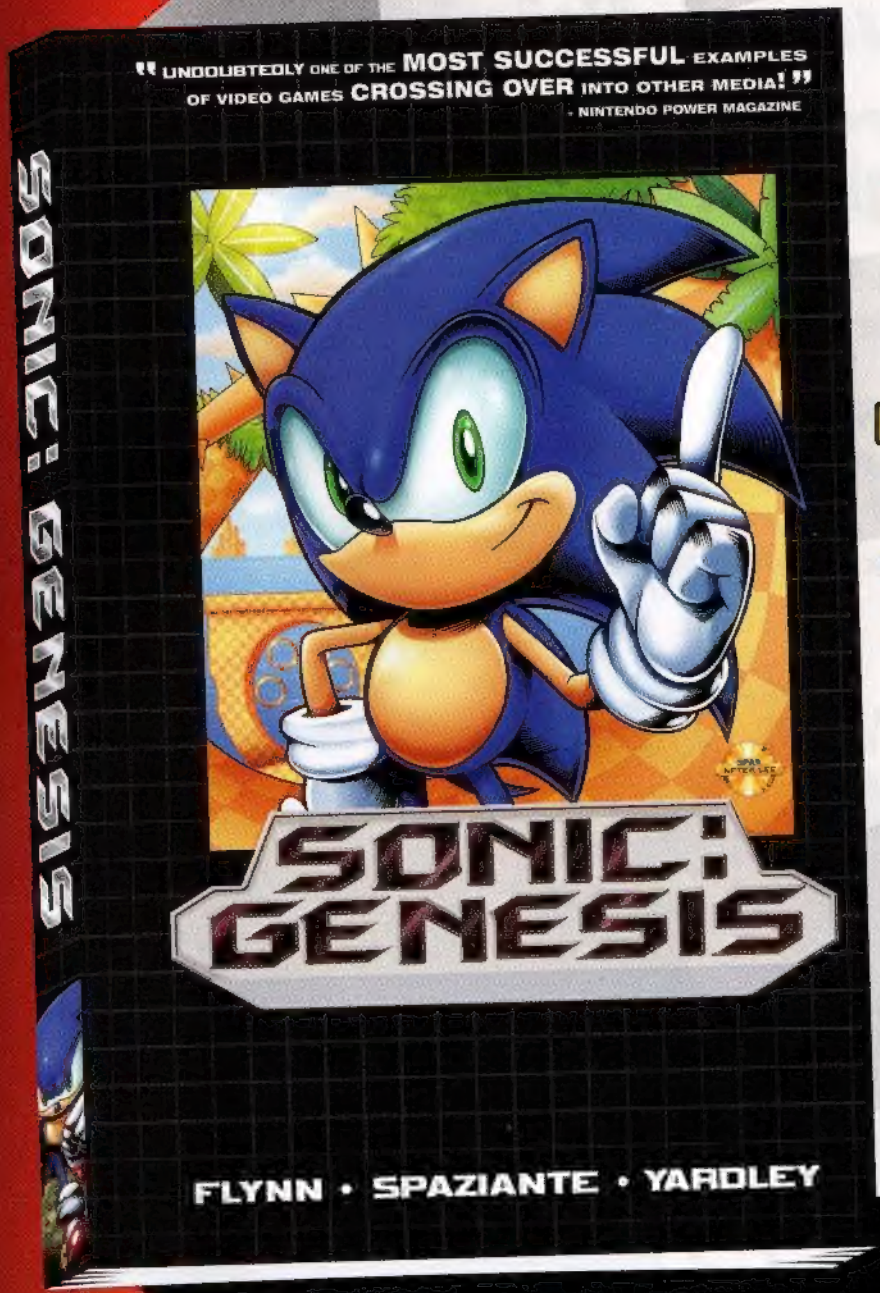
And thanks to all you fans out there who keep this series going strong!

IT'S YOUR SONIC UNIVERSE!

We want your input! Write & tell us what you're likin', lovin', or what's leaving you in the dust! Remember, include "My Sonic Universe" in the subject line on your letter or e-mail! It's your Sonic Universe, after all, so drop us a line!

SONIC: GENESIS

HARDCOVER COLLECTION



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